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Chair: Mr. Gafoor (Singapore)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Tribute to the memory of Cherif Bassiouni, legal scholar

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the members of the Committee observed a minute of silence.*

Organization of work

2. **The Chair** drew attention to the allocation of agenda items to the Committee, as contained in document A/C.6/72/1, and to the note by the Secretariat entitled "Organization of work" (A/C.6/72/L.1).

3. With regard to agenda item 85, "The scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction", he said it was his understanding that, in accordance with the decision by the General Assembly, the Committee wished to establish a working group on the topic, to be chaired by Ms. Duncan Villalobos (Costa Rica), and that the working group would be open to all States Members of the United Nations and relevant observers to the General Assembly.

4. *It was so decided.*

5. **The Chair**, referring to agenda item 109, "Measures to eliminate international terrorism", said it was his understanding that, in accordance with the decision by the General Assembly, the Committee wished to establish a working group, to be chaired by Mr. Perera (Sri Lanka), with a view to finalizing a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and continuing to discuss the item included in its agenda by General Assembly resolution 54/110 concerning the question of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations. The working group would be open to all States Members of the United Nations and relevant observers to the General Assembly.

6. *It was so decided.*

7. **The Chair** drew attention to the proposed timetable for the Committee's work, contained in paragraphs 3 to 6 of the note by the Secretariat entitled "Organization of work" (A/C.6/72/L.1).

8. In accordance with established practice, the proposed programme of work would be applied with flexibility in light of the progress made by the Committee, which would take action on draft resolutions as soon as they were ready for adoption. He encouraged sponsors and coordinators of draft resolutions to use the e-deleGATE portal, which had replaced the *Unite Connections* community of the Sixth Committee, for the presentation of texts of draft resolutions as early as possible and to submit them preferably no later than one week after the completion of the debate of the Committee on each item or the completion of the work of the relevant working group, as the case might be. The taking of action on draft resolutions would always be announced, in advance, in the *Journal of the United Nations*. He took it that the Committee wished to proceed accordingly.

9. *It was so decided.*

10. **The Chair** said that the Committee must allow sufficient time for preparation and consideration of the estimates of expenditure arising from draft resolutions. In that connection, all draft resolutions with financial implications must be submitted to the Fifth Committee by 27 October 2017, except for draft resolutions relating to agenda items scheduled to be considered after that date. He took it that the Committee wished to proceed accordingly.

11. *It was so decided.*

12. **The Chair** stressed that the Committee was required to make full use of the conference resources and facilities made available to it. Although in the past three sessions it had achieved utilization rates above the established benchmark figure of 80 per cent, during the most recent session it had lost 950 minutes because of meetings starting late or ending early.

13. He took it that the Committee wished, as in the past, to follow the practice of the General Assembly in giving precedence on the list of speakers to representatives of regional groups or other groups of States.

14. *It was so decided.*

15. **The Chair** drew attention to paragraph 13 of General Assembly resolution 59/313, which invited Member States that were aligned with statements already made by the chair of a group of Member States, where possible, to focus additional interventions made in their national capacity on points that had not already been adequately addressed in the statements of the group in question, bearing in mind the sovereign right of each Member State to express its national position. He took it that the Committee wished to proceed accordingly.

16. *It was so decided.*

17. **The Chair** said that the Committee would continue to use the Integrated Sustainable PaperSmart Services (PaperSmart) meetings arrangement as part of its efforts to promote sustainability and cost-effectiveness in its working methods. Delegations were

therefore encouraged to rely on the electronic versions of official documents, as the traditional hard copy distribution of documents and statements had been discontinued. Delegations were asked to send electronic copies of their statements to the PaperSmart team for uploading to the PaperSmart portal and to provide 30 hard copies of their statements for the technical services. The PaperSmart portal would be updated on a daily basis and was freely accessible to anyone with Internet access. It was intended to supplement the existing website of the Committee.

Agenda item 109: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (A/72/111 and A/72/111/Add.1)

18. **The Chair** drew attention to the report of the Secretary-General on measures to eliminate international terrorism (A/72/111 and A/72/111/Add.1), the report of the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996 on the work of its sixteenth session (A/68/37), and the oral report by the Chair of the Working Group on measures to eliminate international terrorism of the seventieth session, contained in document A/C.6/71/SR.31.

19. **Mr. Khoshroo** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the Movement unequivocally condemned the crime of terrorism and rejected it in all its forms and manifestations, including acts in which States were directly or indirectly involved. Terrorist acts were a flagrant violation of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in particular the right to life. Such acts endangered the territorial integrity and stability of States and national, regional and international security, and had adverse consequences for economic and social development. Terrorism should not be equated with the legitimate struggle of peoples under colonial or alien domination and foreign occupation to achieve self-determination and national liberation, nor should it be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group, and any such association should not be used to justify measures such as profiling of suspects and intrusion on individual privacy. The brutalization of peoples under foreign occupation must be denounced as the gravest form of terrorism, and the use of State power to prevent peoples struggling against such occupation from exercising their inalienable right to self-determination should be condemned.

20. States should honour their obligation under international law and international humanitarian law to combat terrorism by prosecuting or extraditing the perpetrators of terrorist acts and preventing them from organizing, instigating or financing such acts against other States from within or outside their territory. They should themselves refrain from encouraging activities within their territory directed towards the commission of such acts; allowing their territory to be used for the planning or financing of such acts; and supplying weapons which could be used for that purpose.

21. The Non-Aligned Movement rejected actions, measures and the use or threat of use of force directed against its members by another State under the pretext of combating terrorism or in pursuit of political aims, including by categorizing them directly or indirectly as sponsors of terrorism. It also firmly rejected the unilateral elaboration of lists accusing States of supporting terrorism, a practice that was inconsistent with international law and constituted a form of psychological and political terrorism. States should also refuse to provide political, diplomatic, moral or material support for terrorism and should ensure that the perpetrators, organizers or facilitators of terrorist acts did not abuse refugee or any other legal status.

22. The Movement expressed grave concern over the acute and growing threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters and called on all States to cooperate to address the issue. In that connection, it called upon the United Nations to facilitate capacity-building in accordance with existing mandates to assist States in addressing the problem, upon request. All States that had not yet done so should consider becoming parties to the international instruments on combating terrorism. The Movement was also deeply concerned at the misrepresentation of religions by terrorist groups to justify terrorism and violent extremism. It was essential to address terrorism in an effective and comprehensive manner, including by engaging with community leaders and clerics of all denominations. The Movement strongly condemned the practice of hostage-taking for the purpose of demanding ransom or gaining political concessions and called on all States to cooperate actively in addressing the problem.

23. All States should respect human rights and fundamental freedoms in countering terrorism, in accordance with the rule of law and their obligations under international law. The Non-Aligned Movement called on the Security Council sanctions committees to further streamline their listing and delisting procedures by establishing an independent, transparent and permanent position of Ombudsperson.

24. The Movement reiterated its call for a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response to terrorism and

to identify its root causes. The draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism should be finalized and, to that end, States should cooperate in resolving the outstanding issues. The Movement reaffirmed its support for the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It encouraged all Member States to collaborate with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre. The Movement welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and hoped that it would improve coordination of United Nations counter-terrorism activities.

25. **Mr. Jaime Calderón** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that CELAC condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including cases in which States were directly or indirectly involved. More than ever, terrorism represented a serious threat both to Member States, as it disrupted social structures, and to the international community, since it compromised regional stability and global security.

26. It was essential to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, while recognizing that they could not justify terrorist acts. Such conditions included prolonged unresolved conflicts, discrimination, dehumanization of victims, weakening of the rule of law, human rights violations and prolonged social, political, economic and cultural exclusion. Terrorism could be contained effectively only through enhanced international cooperation. Terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism could not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. It was therefore important to foster a culture of peace, condemn all forms of discrimination, and promote respect for cultural, religious and political diversity. Efforts should be made to combat xenophobia, foster inclusion and dispel stereotypes associated with specific cultures, religious or ethnic groups. Responses to the refugee crisis should reduce rather than increase the risk associated with violent extremism.

27. Measures to combat terrorism must always be in strict compliance with international law, as emphasized in General Assembly resolution 70/148 on the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism. Action taken outside that framework was illegal, unjustifiable and unacceptable. The resolution also underscored the right to privacy, which was a fundamental component of human dignity. CELAC was concerned that State surveillance and the illegal interception of communications, often from abroad, could affect the exercise of human rights. CELAC continued to reject unilateral blacklists that accused States of supporting and sponsoring terrorism; they were incompatible with international law and should be discontinued.

28. The Latin American and Caribbean region had also fallen victim to terrorist acts. The Community strongly condemned such attacks and the circumstances that had enabled those responsible to evade justice. All States should comply without delay with their obligations under international law and cooperate actively in order to bring perpetrators to justice and avoid impunity. The Community emphasized the need to safeguard humanitarian work and expressed concern at recent violations of international humanitarian law, including the use of drones. There was a need to strengthen protection for the victims of terrorism, especially the most vulnerable. In particular, CELAC condemned sexual violence and the destruction of cultural assets, and was deeply concerned at the growing threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters.

29. The role of the Ombudsperson for the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida, and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities had made the delisting procedure more equitable and transparent. In order to ensure due process, the position of Ombudsperson should be made independent and permanent. Ombudspersons should also be appointed for all the other Security Council sanctions regimes. Sanctions should not be an end in themselves; they were part of a broader strategy aimed at finding peaceful and political solutions.

30. The Community was also concerned at the increasing number of letters sent to the Security Council pursuant to Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations — most often after the fact — with a view to using force to combat terrorism. The use of force in a manner inconsistent with the Charter was illegal, unjustifiable and unacceptable. Consideration should be given to the possibility of convening an open and transparent debate on the topic.

31. The international community should redouble its efforts to combat the financing of terrorism through such methods as judicial cooperation, legal assistance and information exchange. United Nations entities should continue to assist States in fulfilling their international obligations in that regard.

32. It should also be recognized, however, that terrorism and transnational organized crime were not

intrinsically or necessarily connected. The words "terrorism", "extremism", "radicalization" and "foreign fighters" continued to lack a clear legal definition. The international community could not afford to postpone indefinitely the convening of a high-level conference to overcome the obstacles to the adoption of a comprehensive convention on the subject and resolve the issue of defining terrorist acts. A clear legal regime would strengthen the rule of law in countering international terrorism.

33. CELAC remained committed to working for the prompt finalization of a comprehensive convention. It urged Member States to show flexibility in resolving all pending issues by the end of the current session of the General Assembly, particularly in the context of the relevant working group of the Sixth Committee.

34. **Ms. Aching** (Trinidad and Tobago), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that CARICOM welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, which would help to coordinate the Organization's counter-terrorism activities. Terrorism was a serious threat to international peace and security and had no respect for territorial borders, race, age, gender or social class. No State was immune from it. The Caribbean region had not been spared and was still awaiting justice for the victims of a terrorist act involving the hijacking and bombing of an aircraft over the Caribbean Sea four decades previously. CARICOM remained deeply concerned at the emergence of new terrorist groups and the surge in the number of foreign terrorist fighters, many of whom were driven by profit or radicalized by subversive materials. In the light of the growing use of social media for incitement and fundraising, it was essential to develop technology to prevent terrorist use of the Internet, detect and control illicit behaviour or content online, and bring the perpetrators to justice. Community outreach programmes would help to challenge terrorist propaganda and disseminate an alternative message.

35. CARICOM was committed to strengthening and implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. At the 38th regular meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM, held from 4 to 6 July 2017, participants had worked to develop a CARICOM counter-terrorism strategy, which was now being finalized. CARICOM States were also members of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and were committed to fulfilling their international obligations with respect to combating money-laundering and the financing of terrorism.

36. A comprehensive convention against international terrorism would be the appropriate instrument to prosecute terrorists and strengthen the institutional capacity of States, especially small States, to fight terrorism. The time was long overdue to take more progressive action on the draft comprehensive convention, in particular by resolving outstanding political differences such as those relating to the legal definition of international terrorism and the scope of acts to be included in the instrument. The Community therefore welcomed the decision to establish a working group for that purpose. While CARICOM did not view the holding of a high-level conference on terrorism as a prelude to the finalization of the text of a draft convention, such a conference could be a useful opportunity for Member States to exchange views with representatives of the various counter-terrorism committees and other actors on ways of enhancing implementation of relevant resolutions and treaties. In addition to such measures, national and multilateral action should be taken in order to address the root causes of terrorism and radicalization, including marginalization, high unemployment and inequality. Counter-terrorism measures must be consistent with international law, including human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law.

37. **Ms. Cujo** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that international terrorism continued to pose a serious threat to global peace and security. The international community had a responsibility not only to condemn terrorism but also to take action to prevent and counter it in all its forms and manifestations. The recently established Office of Counter-Terrorism would provide new momentum for United Nations efforts in that regard.

38. The European Union and its member States were fully committed to combating terrorism in Europe and beyond. Their primary objective was to eradicate Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and other terrorist groups. Their approach to countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism was based on criminal justice and fully complied with international law, including international human rights law.

39. It was crucial to secure forensic evidence for crimes committed by terrorists and to ensure that persons who committed such crimes were held accountable. The European Union commended the Government of Iraq for its willingness to hold ISIL

accountable for its crimes and would continue to support such endeavours. In that connection, it welcomed the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 2379 (2017), which established an investigative team to support domestic efforts to hold ISIL accountable by collecting, preserving and storing evidence in Iraq of acts perpetrated by the group that might amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

40. The European Union was committed to working with all its partners to eliminate the scourge of terrorism. Its priorities included addressing the threat posed by returning foreign terrorist fighters, preventing and countering radicalization, ensuring that terrorists and their backers were brought to justice, improving information exchange, strengthening the European Counter-Terrorism Centre, cutting off the access of terrorists to firearms and explosives, countering terrorist financing and protecting citizens and critical infrastructure. The European Union had strengthened its legal framework for combating terrorism through the adoption of a sanctions regime targeting ISIL and Al-Qaida. The initiative by the European Union to improve cross-border access to electronic evidence within its territory would improve the capacity of the law enforcement agencies of its member States to investigate and prosecute terrorist crimes.

41. The European Union had adopted a directive criminalizing terrorist financing and the funding of recruitment, training and travel for terrorist purposes. A proposed amendment to the existing European Union directive on money-laundering would enhance transparency with regard to the beneficial ownership of corporate entities and legal arrangements to limit the risk of their being used for terrorist financing. The European Union worked closely with its international partners, including within the framework of the Global Counterterrorism Forum and the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL.

42. The European Union had enhanced its bilateral and multilateral engagement with States and international organizations to combat Islamist terrorism since the adoption of its regional strategy for Syria and Iraq. Work should be intensified in Africa, Central Asia, South Asia and South-East Asia, where entire societies were affected by the activities of terrorist groups with links to ISIL. The States members of the European Union aimed to address the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon, stabilize areas liberated from ISIL control, cut off financing for ISIL, and counter ISIL messaging, including by preventing the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes. Long-term efforts to defeat ISIL must also address the political and socioeconomic factors that had facilitated its expansion.

43. The creation of the Office of Counter-Terrorism was an important step towards enhancing the role and impact of the United Nations in efforts to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism. The European Union and its member States were committed to closely cooperating with the Office to promote a strong and efficient United Nations capable of spearheading global efforts to prevent violent extremism and counter terrorism through an approach that balanced the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Those efforts should be consistent with other United Nations policies, in particular in the areas of human rights and development, in order to ensure success on the ground. It was important to take a comprehensive approach that involved young people, women, local communities and victims of terrorism in policy implementation. The European Union called for effective and efficient coordination within the United Nations system and between the United Nations and other international organizations and forums. To that end, it would be necessary to establish more linkages between entities, promote systematic cooperation, and monitor and evaluate the impact of the work of the United Nations.

44. The European Union believed that the work and initiatives of the Global Counterterrorism Forum ought to be better reflected in the United Nations agenda on counter-terrorism and preventing violent extremism. It encouraged all Member States to actively participate in the meetings of the Forum and reap the benefits of its work. The European Union would continue to support the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute.

45. The European Union worked closely with the United Nations in its counter-terrorism activities, in particular by engaging in regular dialogue on the issue and providing funding for counter-terrorism projects initiated or coordinated by the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre. The European Union fully supported the Office of the Ombudsperson for the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities and called for the position of Ombudsperson, which had recently become vacant, to be filled immediately by a person with a strong judicial background. The European Union remained committed

to strengthening due process in the sanctions regime and had taken steps to improve its procedures accordingly. It firmly believed that any measures to combat terrorism must be consistent with international law.

46. The European Union called once more on all States Members of the United Nations to ratify and implement all United Nations legal instruments on counter-terrorism. It recognized Member States' efforts towards reaching an agreement on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and remained committed to its successful conclusion. Democracies should never compromise their values in the face of the challenge of terrorism.

47. The resolution on measures to eliminate international terrorism that was regularly considered by the Sixth Committee overlapped to a certain extent with the negotiations taking place in the General Assembly in plenary towards a resolution to review implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It would be useful to rationalize the General Assembly's work by considering each of those items biennially in alternation. The previous session had shown that delegations were not willing to consider in the Sixth Committee items that had already been discussed in plenary.

48. **Mr. Ke** (Cambodia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that international terrorism undermined international peace and security, hindered sustainable development and global economic prosperity, and contributed to a general climate of fear and anxiety that disrupted the social fabric of societies. The States members of ASEAN remained deeply concerned about the continuing threat posed by terrorist organizations around the world. They strongly condemned and rejected terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and would continue to work tirelessly to eradicate terrorist acts and bring their perpetrators to justice. Combating terrorism was a global undertaking that required a comprehensive and well-coordinated approach led by the United Nations. In that connection, ASEAN fully supported the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which had promoted cooperation at all levels, in particular with regard to information-sharing, exchange of best practices, technical assistance and capacity-building. ASEAN welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and was committed to developing a close relationship with that Office, with a view to ensuring coordination and coherence in the implementation of the Global Strategy and the relevant Security Council resolutions.

49. ASEAN appreciated the work of CTED, CTITF, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre and other relevant United Nations bodies and the assistance they had provided to Member States. It encouraged those mechanisms to redouble their efforts to implement their work plans and programmes. In that context, it was important to avoid duplication of effort by adopting a more integrated and comprehensive approach that would promote consistency and effective cooperation.

50. ASEAN had taken proactive measures to enhance coordination and cooperation within its region and beyond. All 10 of its member States had ratified the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism and were committed to implementing it while taking full account of other relevant international instruments and guidelines, including the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism and the relevant United Nations resolutions. ASEAN was working closely with regional partners to combat radicalization and extremism. In that connection, it had organized a number of regional workshops and would be convening a ministerial-level meeting on the rise of radicalization and violent extremism in October 2017. Counter-terrorism instruments were also of interest to the region because they would bolster efforts to address trafficking in persons. The planned strengthening of the ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime would further enhance the regional response to emerging transnational challenges that had the potential to undermine peace and security.

51. All States had a role to play in addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development would effectively address the root causes of violence and thereby promote the establishment of peaceful, just and inclusive societies. In that connection, ASEAN reiterated its position that terrorism could not and must not be associated with any religion, race, nationality or ethnicity, and counter-terrorism efforts must respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international humanitarian and human rights law. The principles of independence, the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in the internal affairs of States were essential to ensure an effective global counter-terrorism response. The delegations of the States members of ASEAN stood ready to work actively with other delegations to refine and improve the global counter-terrorism architecture, and attached importance to the Committee's

deliberations on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

52. **Ms. McDougall** (Australia), speaking also on behalf of Canada and New Zealand, said that the threat posed by violent extremist groups and ideologies continued to evolve, despite the collective efforts of Member States. Real progress had been made against ISIL in Iraq and Syria, but sustained commitment would be needed to address the expanding influence of ISIL in South-East Asia and the rise in individuals willing to commit low-sophistication attacks on home soil. The travel of foreign terrorist fighters also gave cause for concern.

53. Australia, Canada and New Zealand continued to support the finalization of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. However, pending an agreement on a draft text, Member States should focus on implementing the valuable existing counter-terrorism conventions and Security Council resolutions. The three countries urged Member States to accede to those conventions and incorporate their obligations into domestic law. Furthermore, States should enhance cooperation in the areas of law enforcement and international crime in order to ensure an effective and coordinated international response to terrorism.

54. United Nations sanctions regimes were a vital tool for disrupting terrorist financing. States should ensure that perpetrators of terrorist acts could be held accountable under domestic criminal law, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) concerning terrorist financing, and Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) concerning the recruitment and travel of foreign terrorist fighters. Australia, Canada and New Zealand welcomed the adoption of Security Council resolution 2322 (2016) concerning international judicial and law enforcement cooperation on terrorist-related offences, which highlighted the importance of the exchange of information between States and the investigation and prosecution of terrorist acts.

55. The continuing ability of ISIL to attract supporters underscored the need for the international community to strengthen its efforts to counter violent extremist messaging. Australia, Canada and New Zealand firmly supported the role of the United Nations in countering terrorism and in the implementation of the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, and looked forward to working with the Office of Counter-Terrorism in that regard. They also commended the work of the Global Counterterrorism Forum in developing guidance on the prevention of extremism online and the protection of soft targets. Community groups and civil society organizations also had a critical role to play in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism. In that connection, Australia, Canada and New Zealand had worked with local partners in Bangladesh, Kenya, Kosovo, Mali and Nigeria to strengthen community resilience and address the drivers of violent extremism through the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund.

56. Australia, Canada and New Zealand remained committed to working closely with other Member States to develop coordinated and effective international responses to terrorism. It was essential to continue to counter extremist messaging while fully respecting the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including international humanitarian law, international human rights law and international refugee law.

57. **Ms. Mejía Vélez** (Colombia) said that her delegation fully supported the functions of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, which would ensure the balanced implementation of the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Her country condemned and rejected terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; it was unacceptable and unjustifiable in any circumstances, could not and should not be associated with any religion, civilization, nationality or ethnic group. In order for global counter-terrorism efforts to achieve the desired results, they must be in strict compliance with international law.

58. New types of terrorist threats to international peace and security had emerged in recent years, the most serious of which was the dissemination of violent extremist and terrorist ideologies. Addressing such a dangerous and sophisticated phenomenon would require concerted action that and measures that addressed not just judicial, military and security issues but also the underlying problems related to development, good governance, human rights and, in particular, humanitarian concerns. States must pay attention to the victims of terrorism and establish mechanisms to protect and promote their rights, as a key pillar of efforts to defend and promote human rights.

59. Dialogue, cooperation and joint action were a necessary foundation for civilized coexistence free from the scourge of terrorism. The experience of her country was proof that success was possible. After decades of internal conflict in which terrorism was used as a military tactic, negotiations had led to the transformation of the Fuerzas Armadas

Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) into a political party and the entry into force of a temporary bilateral ceasefire between the national armed forces and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional. Her Government appreciated the support it had received from the United Nations in those processes.

60. During the current session of the General Assembly, significant consideration should be given to the matter of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism that addressed the deficiencies and omissions of the existing juridical framework, in order to enable coherent international action to be taken to combat the scourge of terrorism.

61. **Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Peru) said that his delegation had supported the creation of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the appointment of an Under-Secretary-General to head that Office, as the reform of the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture would increase the visibility, efficiency, coherence and coordination of the actions of the United Nations system. His Government strongly condemned and rejected terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. One of the lessons his country had learned during the two decades it had spent dealing with violence from terrorist groups was that it was crucial to respect the rule of law and human rights in combating terrorism.

62. Terrorism was a serious threat that affected all areas of work of the United Nations, including peace and security, sustainable development, human rights and humanitarian action. His delegation therefore supported all multilateral action that was part of a systematic, sustained and efficient response to the scourge of terrorism and that respected international law and human rights. In that connection, his delegation was strongly committed to the balanced implementation of the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and welcomed the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, which complemented the Strategy. It was of particular importance to reduce the underlying structural and contextual factors that gave rise to radicalization, to decrease inequality and to strengthen the social fabric, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As a member of the Group of Friends on Countering and Preventing Violent Extremism, Peru was promoting a comprehensive approach to combating terrorism and violent extremism, as demonstrated by its role in the drafting of Human Rights Council resolution 30/15, which sought to disassociate religion and culture from violent extremism.

63. The expansion of terrorist groups was partly a result of the financial resources at their disposal. It was therefore necessary to cut off their sources of financing and their links to transnational organized crime, which provided them with funds, human resources and weapons. In that connection, his Government was participating in efforts to improve financial and customs intelligence and to combat money-laundering. It was also important to prevent the Internet, including social networking sites, from being used for terrorist purposes, while simultaneously enhancing the use of information and communications technology to limit, counter and undermine terrorist messaging. Furthermore, it was necessary to prevent terrorist groups from using civil society platforms to recruit members, raise funds, publicize their actions, glorify the commission of criminal acts or incite others to commit terrorist acts, without infringing the rights to freedom of expression and association. His Government had recently adopted a law criminalizing the glorification of terrorism.

64. While the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy represented a step forward, the moral authority of the United Nations was being undermined by the failure to reach an agreement on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The General Assembly should be in a position to send an unequivocal message that terrorism was not acceptable under any circumstances. His delegation stood ready to make every effort to find a solution to the issues still outstanding for the conclusion of such a convention. It remained committed to combating terrorism and violent extremism at the national and international levels and wished to reiterate its solidarity with the victims of terrorist attacks.

65. **Mr. Umasankar** (India) said that terrorism threatened the very existence of States and undermined the foundation of the democratic and political social order. The international community must adopt a policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism. His Government condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including State-sponsored cross-border terrorism, which no cause or grievance could justify. Terrorism was a deliberate and systematic use of coercive intimidation that was beyond the capacity of ordinary law enforcement agencies to address. Continuing terrorist attacks around the world, many of which were linked to elements beyond the borders of the affected State, demonstrated that no State was immune to the threat of terrorism and that no State could tackle the threat alone.

66. His delegation welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, which it hoped would

strengthen the delivery of United Nations counter-terrorism capacity-building assistance to Member States. The General Assembly had played a major norm-setting role in the fight against international terrorism, having adopted three important counter-terrorism instruments formulated by the Ad Hoc Committee that it had established in its resolution 51/210. It was regrettable that efforts to elaborate a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism had become entangled in the issue of the definition of the word "terrorist", and that narrow geopolitical interests continued to prevent meaningful progress towards the adoption of a convention. His delegation supported the text proposed in 2007 by the coordinator of the Ad Hoc Committee.

67. His Government attached particular importance to counter-terrorism cooperation and exchange of information at the international, regional and subregional levels. India was a party to 14 international counter-terrorism instruments.

68. India remained deeply concerned about the financing of terrorism and foreign terrorist fighters, despite numerous Security Council resolutions calling on States to refrain from providing any form of active or passive support to entities or persons involved in such acts, including by suppressing the recruitment of members of terrorist groups and eliminating the supply of weapons to terrorists. It strongly condemned direct or indirect financial assistance given by States to terrorist groups or their members to pursue their activities, including for the defence of accused terrorists. India had been at the forefront of global counter-terrorism efforts and was part of all major global initiatives on the topic, including FATF.

69. The international community could not afford to deal with terrorist groups or dismantle their infrastructure in a selective manner. Collective efforts must be stepped up, with real-time cooperation to confront the scourge of terrorism decisively. The use of terrorism as an instrument of State policy could not be tolerated.

70. **Mr. Liang** (Singapore) said that terrorism continued to pose a serious threat to global peace and security, caused profound human suffering, disrupted the social fabric of States and undermined the rule of law. Terrorist acts ran counter to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and could not be justified under any circumstances.

71. Terrorism was constantly evolving. Returning foreign terrorist fighters and the increase in attacks by self-radicalized "lone wolf" actors were creating new challenges for security agencies. Addressing terrorism required coordinated and comprehensive strategies at the national and international levels. Singapore had adopted a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy and equipped its security forces with new skills and tools to combat the constantly evolving methods and tactics of terrorist groups, including their use of social media. It had also formed new emergency response teams that were trained to react swiftly in the event of a terrorist incident in order to minimize casualties. In recognition of the pivotal role that the community played in combating terrorism, the Government had launched a national movement, called "SG Secure", in 2016 to train and mobilize communities in the fight against terrorism. His Government was also working alongside religious and inter-faith organizations to counter the spread of extremist ideologies, including through deradicalization programmes.

72. Singapore supported the call for a strong, sustained and coordinated global response to terrorism. It was party to 14 international counter-terrorism agreements and was committed to implementing them. In addition, it had acceded to the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism and was working in close cooperation with its regional partners to fight terrorism.

73. His Government worked closely with the members of FATF to identify best practices and enhance international cooperation on combating money-laundering and terrorist financing, and FATF considered the Singaporean legal and institutional framework to be strong. In April 2017, his Government had entered into a partnership with the finance industry to combat money-laundering and terrorist financing, and in August 2017 it had organized a workshop on terrorist financing investigation and prosecution, with assistance from the United States.

74. The United Nations had an important role to play in coordinating the global response to terrorism. His delegation supported the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism. The working group established with a view to finalizing the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism had faced challenges but was making progress. His delegation called on all parties to increase their efforts to bring the discussions on the matter of a draft convention to a successful conclusion.

75. **Mr. Ja'afari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that certain Member States had placed their extremist ideology and their considerable resources and influence at the disposal of armed terrorist groups in his country. So long as that irresponsible policy

remained in place, the Security Council counter-terrorism resolutions and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy would remain a dead letter, and it would be impossible to adopt a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Such States saw foreign terrorist fighters as a weapon to bring down legitimate Governments, destroy economies and kill or displace civilians.

76. The report on foreign terrorist fighters prepared by the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team established pursuant to resolution 1526 (2004) (S/2015/358) showed that the fighters who had travelled to the Syrian Arab Republic came from over 100 Member States. They were ordinary civilians who had been indoctrinated with extremist, terrorist Wahhabi ideology at schools and religious centres financed with billions of dollars derived from the sale of oil and gas. Many of those people had been placed under surveillance, particularly in the European Union, until petty political interests had determined that they should be deployed to the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq, partly in order to spread terrorism and partly in order to remove them from Western societies. Governments had systematically issued tens of thousands of passports and entry visas to blur the fighters' tracks. Some individuals had transited through as many as five airports on a single journey. Weapons, training camps and operations rooms had been set up in neighbouring countries to assist the fighters, who were now dubbed "the moderate armed opposition", having presumably undergone some form of genetic modification to become Syrian. Their infiltration into Syrian territory had been overseen by intelligence officers from other States, some of which were also buying Syrian and Iraqi oil and antiquities from ISIL and other terrorist organizations. The States in question had turned a blind eye while the Internet and social media were used to disseminate violent extremist ideology, raise funds for terrorists and exchange coded messages regarding future attacks.

77. His country's bitter experience over the previous seven years showed that certain powerful and influential States lacked the political will to combat terrorism. The international community must hold those States accountable; it must cut off the head of the serpent, instead of chasing its tail.

78. **Mr. Dowdall** (United Kingdom) said that the establishment by a number of high-technology companies of the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism was of enormous significance, as it marked an increase in the efforts of private-sector companies to address the potential exploitation of their services by terrorists, while maintaining respect for vital freedoms. The initiative involved strong dialogue with Governments. France, Italy and the United Kingdom had hosted the first high-level event with those companies under the auspices of the United Nations on 21 September 2017. His delegation encouraged Member States to consider how they could work with the Forum, including through new and existing regional mechanisms.

79. His delegation welcomed the creation of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, by which the United Nations had rightly put prevention at the core of its counter-terrorism efforts. The United Nations must now draw on its unique resources to support States in the implementation of prevention measures. The United Kingdom had funded a number of peacekeeping and strategic communications projects on the prevention of violent extremism and urged other Member States to follow suit.

80. The global mission to raise aviation security standards must continue. It was clear from events of the past year that terrorists continued to plot to bring down aircraft. Work by the International Civil Aviation Organization and others had intensified since the adoption of the unprecedented Security Council resolution 2309 (2016). His delegation encouraged Member States to continue to introduce new measures to improve aviation security, which was vital to the global economy.

81. **Ms. Carnal** (Switzerland) said that her Government strongly condemned terrorism, which continued to spread destruction, fear and hate throughout the world. Respect for international law, in particular international human rights law and international humanitarian law, was not only an end in itself but was also crucial to combat terrorism in a sustainable and effective manner. In that connection, her Government was concerned about the impact that national and international counter-terrorism measures were having on the delivery of humanitarian and medical assistance to victims of armed conflict and other activities undertaken pursuant to international humanitarian law. It therefore supported the adoption of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism that guaranteed respect for international humanitarian law.

82. The United Nations played a crucial role in combating terrorism. Her Government was fully committed to implementing the United Nations conventions, protocols and resolutions on counter-terrorism while respecting international human rights law and international humanitarian law. Her delegation welcomed the creation of the Office of Counter-

Terrorism and the efforts that would be made under the Under-Secretary-General of that Office to ensure the harmonized and balanced implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

83. Switzerland participated actively in the Global Counterterrorism Forum, placing particular emphasis on the implementation of the relevant United Nations instruments. In its capacity as Co-Chair of the Forum's working group on criminal justice and the rule of law, Switzerland intended to focus on the gathering, sharing and use of evidence; administrative measures; juvenile justice; and the role of women in combating terrorism.

84. **Mr. Sandoval Mendiolea** (Mexico) said that it was unacceptable that 700 terrorist attacks resulting in at least 4,450 fatalities had been perpetrated around the world thus far in 2017. Terrorism had had an unprecedented impact on international peace and security in recent years, making it one of the principal challenges faced by the global community. Collective action, in particular in the area of prevention, must be taken to address the threat. National and regional legal frameworks must continue to be updated to take into account the evolving practices of terrorist groups. In that connection, it should be borne in mind that ideologies that promoted extremism, violence and intolerance were being disseminated at an alarming rate through online platforms, which had a particularly significant effect on young people and women and gave rise to new challenges relating to democracy and human rights.

85. Existing legal frameworks must be fully implemented. The international community had an obligation to work to implement comprehensive strategies to prevent and combat terrorism while respecting international law, in particular international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law. Universal human rights must be protected without distinction of religion or region. Failure to respect those obligations led to discrimination, racism and xenophobia and thus undermined the effectiveness of strategies to prevent and counter the violent extremism that led to terrorism. There was no possible solution that did not involve social inclusion and sustainable development.

86. The international community must also continue to work to improve international legal cooperation with regard to the arrest and imprisonment of members of terrorist groups, the exchange of intelligence and the gathering of evidence. Such measures were essential to ensure justice for victims of terrorism, an issue that was often given secondary importance.

87. At the national level, his Government had increased security at its borders, embassies, ports and airports and worked closely with neighbouring States on matters such as the prevention of terrorist financing. It was also working towards the adoption of multilateral measures to prevent and combat terrorism and violent extremism, while recognizing that there were logistical difficulties in taking action against terrorist groups whose tactics and operations were constantly evolving.

88. His Government, like those of the other States members of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, was concerned that the frequent invocation of Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations as a justification for taking military action against terrorist groups could lead to a de facto increase in exceptions to the general prohibition of the use of force established in Article 2 of the Charter. His delegation therefore called for thorough consideration of that matter by the Sixth Committee.

89. His Government would continue to cooperate on strategies to prevent and combat terrorism through comprehensive action to implement the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, taking into consideration new threats concerning such issues as cybersecurity, maritime security and aviation security. His delegation supported the stronger focus being placed on prevention and, in that connection, welcomed the creation of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the appointment of an Under-Secretary-General as head of that Office. Mexico strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and wished to express its solidarity with Governments and families that had been victims of terrorist attacks.

90. **Mr. Mohamed** (Sudan) said that his Government condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including State terrorism. The Sudan remained committed to implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in a comprehensive, sustainable and coordinated manner. It welcomed the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, which it hoped would help to coordinate the work of the Organization's numerous counter-terrorism entities. In order to protect its values and principles, the international community must continue to support national capacity-building projects and promote the exchange of information and intelligence, including through such entities as the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).

91. The Sudan had ratified all international conventions on international terrorism, in addition to African and Arab regional conventions on the subject. The Sudan played an active part in the counter-terrorism strategies of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the League of Arab States. At the domestic level, one of its most important actions had been to establish a counter-terrorism authority bringing together various ministries and governmental bodies. The national counter-terrorism strategy of the Sudan had been developed in consultation with representatives of civil society, religious leaders and academics. The national plan to counter violent extremism focused on conflict prevention, good governance, human rights and the rule of law, engaging with local communities; empowering young people; fostering gender equality; empowering women, and promoting education, capacity-building, employment and strategic communications, notably through the Internet and social media.

92. Countering terrorism and violent extremism entailed fighting poverty, achieving balanced and sustainable development and strengthening dialogue between the North and the South. Counter-terrorism efforts must be consistent with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and other relevant instruments, international human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law. Any human rights violation would merely be exploited by terrorists for recruitment and propaganda purposes. For the same reason, terrorism should not be linked to any particular religion, ethnic group or nation. His delegation stood ready to participate fully in informal negotiations towards a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.